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## THE SOLDIER'S DYING GRIEF AND GLORY.

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Anthony and Patrick —— were the only children of a poor farmer in Ireland. He had enough to keep his family pretty comfortably, till the great famine, when he was compelled, like many others, to go over to America. By them religion had been but little thought of. Arrived in their new home, they settled down with many others from their place in a new clearing. But loss of property, banishment, and sorrow, instead of driving them to Him whose blessing maketh rich, hardened their hearts; and, to banish care, this unhappy family took to that fatal drink which has ruined thousands. About Christmas, 1856, a letter was received from their country, stating the death of a relative, who had left them all his money. The family joyfully returned to Ireland, but drink had done its fatal work for the father, and he never saw his home again. The mother and her sons took a house in the Village of ——. By this time the boys were grown into handsome young men; they were all the world to each other. Soon came that bitter wail from India of murders and sufferings too frightful to dwell on. Loud was the call which pealed through Britain for men to join the lists, and go forth and defend those helpless ones in that far distant

land. That call sounded in the ears of the brothers, and, welcoming a change, they enlisted. Bitter were their mother's lamentations when she heard it—for had they not now enough and to spare? But it was done, and as their mother had never endeared herself to her children, so that the lads cared not much to leave her, so long as they had each other.

Anthony and Patrick had a speedy voyage, and landed safe in India. There the old temptation to drink assailed them; and, during the few days they were detained in Calcutta, fearfully did they indulge in this sin. On the march up country, Patrick was seized with sun-stroke at a village called Dearee, on the Soane, and from thence was borne insensible to the next station. Poor Anthony was wretched; he marched by his brother's doolie, and at the next station obtained leave to remain by his brother till evening, when he *must* leave with his detachment.

The twenty-four hours on the road without medical aid had done their work for Patrick; all who saw him knew that he was dying. His brother felt it too; and it was sad to hear that passionate pleading, "Oh, speak to me once again, Pat! Sure, you'll never go and leave me all alone then; oh, speak to me again!"

The writer was in the habit of visiting the hospitals, and came in during the course of the morning. I was told by one of their regiment that they were dissolute, drinking lads. It seemed too late for a ray of hope to shine on that awful death-bed, and hopeless to strive to check that heart-rending grief. Patrick had never recovered consciousness from the time of his seizure. I asked Anthony his history, which he gave as I have narrated; "and now," he continued, "if Pat dies, where will he go?" I opened my Bible, and long did

we read and talk together over Luke xxiii, 39, 43, and the second chapter of Ephesians. Fearfully excited did the poor boy become as his heart opened to understand and believe the wondrous love of Jesus, the Lord of Glory, dying for *all* sinners. That love constrained his heart. "Oh," he said, "it would not be hard to love Him, and give all up for Him. This here drinking has never done us any good; but oh! tell me what I can do for my brother? Oh! what if he die like the thief, without looking kindly on this Saviour? What if he die in his sin?"

I told him he could pray, and long did we plead together for the poor sufferer. I rose at length to go. "Will you," said Anthony, "*promise* me to look in at him while he lives, and write me word of him?"

About five, p. m., I called again at the hospital, but a group of men in the verandah told me Patrick was dead, and his brother was gone to stay by the body till the marching hour. One of the men took a Bible and some printed hymns for me to Anthony.

Weeks passed, and I heard no more of him. One morning I was sitting by the side of a wounded Highlander (he has now gone home to Jesus), when some doolies were brought into the portico, and amongst the men in them I recognised several old friends. Amongst them was Anthony. He looked ill, very ill; and his right sleeve hung unoccupied at his side, telling a tale of battle and suffering. No one could look on that tall, fine young man, handsome and soldier-like, though pale and haggard, without realizing keenly the bitterness of sins's consequences.

Yet, as I looked at Anthony, I felt the expression of care was chastened, and there was something very touching in his calm, sad look. "I have come to die where my brother died," he said.

From that day he faded rapidly. As to himself, he had found Jesus, and enjoyed sweet peace. All his sins, he felt, were forgiven; "and now," he often said to me, "I should long to go, but it haunts me that Pat mayn't be there, and yet he was a better lad than me. Why was I saved, and he not? Oh, I would have died to have him in my place. It is so hard to believe it *just*."

Again and again he implored me to tell him if I thought Pat would be in heaven.

How could I comfort him on this subject? I could only say that we know not what passes between the soul and its Maker. That he must remember Jesus died for sinners, and that, therefore, He *wills* not that any should perish.

To change his thoughts from so painfully hopeless a theme, I urged him to pray, while he had time, for his mother, and great comfort he found in so doing. "If I am heard, and she is saved, it will perhaps make heaven a little happier; but, oh, if Pat is not there! No; I can never be happy if he is lost!"

About five weeks after his first coming into hospital he died. I saw him late on the Saturday afternoon. "Just when Pat died," he said, "at the evening hour; but he had no Saviour—no hope! And I—oh, if I knew he was but forgiven, I should be so *happy*." For some days past he had wandered much in mind, and it touched the manly hearts around, to hear ever that plaintive appeal, "Tell me, do you think Pat was forgiven?" "I was as bad as ever he was." "Oh, speak to me again."

My Highland friend was often by Anthony, and having learnt in his sickness the love of Jesus, his heart was full of ardent first love. Unweariedly did he give



the sufferer drink, and administer to his various needs. Indeed, through all my experience of hospital life, I never saw more beautiful devotion than was evinced among the men. Night and day did many of those able to move watch the bedside of a sick comrade. And it was a source of mutual enjoyment when the Scotchman read his Bible, and prayed with Anthony. On this Saturday afternoon, Campbell and I were seated on the dying lad's charpoy, when Campbell said, "The thought has just come to my mind, that your brother, may be, was not insensible all the while. He may have heard the message of mercy, and joined in prayer. 'Lord, remember me;' and like the thief, at the last hour, may have been forgiven." Eagerly did Anthony drink in every word; and the intense joy which lighted up that face, I can never forget.

"Now, Lord, lettest thou thy servant depart in peace," he said. "Yes, yes, I never thought of that. How wicked I have been to grieve so. The love of Christ constraineth me, and all deep, quiet in his heart, it may have constrained him. I believe he has heard me, and my mother too will be there. Pat is, perhaps, waiting for me, thinking to surprise me. Dear Campbell, you have made me so happy."

He asked me to read the last verses of Revelation, vii, 9-17. "It is all light now. I am so happy. I long to go."

"Jesus sought me when a stranger."

"He has done all things well. He has remembered me. I shall soon see Jesus. There will be no night in our home!" These were the last words he spoke. He seemed exhausted, and laid apparently unconscious till nine, P. M., when he went home to Jesus!

A few weeks after, I received a letter from his uncle in Ireland, saying that his mother had received her son's letter, with the solemn tidings of Patrick's death, and Anthony's conversion. At his request she had procured a Bible, and attended religious service. "And," wrote the uncle, "though her past bad way of life had brought her into ill-health, so that when the letter came she had but three or four weeks to live, yet I make bold to say that I'm sure she's happy now, though I would have been glad to have her die in our persuasion."

And now, dear reader, can you wonder if I make this tale of redeeming love a ground for an appeal to *you*, to *give something* toward sending ministers, bibles, and tracts to our soldiers.

In this history, mark, it was the simple message of mercy, contained in Luke xxiii, and Ephesians ii, which touched a sinner's heart, and *at once* brought him to his Saviour's feet. And is not this fact an encouragement to those who humbly and prayerfully seek to prepare his way? His word "*shall* prosper in the thing whereto he sends it." Isaiah lv.

Will *you* not, if you cannot go yourself to the work, *give your money* to send those who *can*?

Dear reader, you are not your own! Your money is not your own! You are but a servant, and remember *soon you must* see Jesus! How will you answer him in the great day of reckoning, if you have not done what you *could* in preparing his way?

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PUBLISHED BY THE

## SOUTH CAROLINA TRACT SOCIETY.

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